



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

OFFICE OF CHALLENGE GRANTS

## CREATING HUMANITIES COMMUNITIES

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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#### Eligibility

##### **Are organizations from my state eligible to apply?**

Each year, NEH compiles comparative funding data for the preceding year. Based on this data, NEH designates twenty states with the lowest funding levels as “incentive areas.” Organizations in these states are eligible to serve as lead applicants for a Creating Humanities Communities grant. In 2017, following states are incentive areas:

Alabama	Iowa	New Mexico	South Dakota
Alaska	Kentucky	North Dakota	Utah
Arkansas	Montana	Oklahoma	Vermont
Hawaii	Nebraska	Rhode Island	West Virginia
Idaho	Nevada	South Carolina	Wyoming

##### **Are organizations from U.S. territories eligible to apply?**

If your organization is in one of the following U.S. territories (American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands), you are considered part of an incentive area and eligible to apply.

##### **Do all collaborating organizations have to be located in the same state or U.S. territory?**

Institutions outside of incentive areas are eligible to participate as collaborating organizations. However, the lead organization must be located in an incentive area. In addition, over half of the partnering organizations must be located in incentive areas. For example, in a partnership of three organizations, two must be located in an incentive area. Similarly, in a partnership of four or five organizations, at least three must be located in an incentive area.

## **What types of organizations are eligible to apply?**

The following sorts of organizations are eligible:

- 501(c)(3) organizations; and
- state and local government agencies, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments.

Eligible organizations might include, for example, cultural centers, museums, historical societies, colleges (including community colleges) and universities, archival repositories, historic houses, school districts, civic centers, as well as other sorts of organizations doing work in the humanities.

## **What types of organizations are ineligible?**

The following sorts of organizations are ineligible:

- chambers of commerce, business leagues, labor unions, and recreational clubs; and
- “for profit” organizations.

## **I work for a state humanities council. Can we apply for a Creating Humanities Communities grant?**

State Humanities Councils are not eligible to be lead applicants. However, they can participate as partner organizations.

## **My organization is a current (active) recipient of a Challenge Grant. Are we eligible to apply?**

Recipients of Challenge Grants (whose grant numbers start with CH-) are not eligible to apply as lead applicants to the Creating Humanities Communities program until three years after the end of their grants. Recipients of Challenge Grants for Two-Year Colleges (whose grant numbers start with CZ-) are not eligible to apply as lead applicants to the Creating Humanities Communities program until one year after the end of their grants.

## **My institution applied for a grant last year in another NEH program and was unsuccessful. Will this be held against us if we apply again this year?**

No.

## **We are an arts organization, are we be eligible to apply?**

As noted above, 501(c)(3) organizations, state and local governmental agencies, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments may apply for a Creating Humanities Communities grant. Your organization may apply for a Creating Humanities Communities grant, however, only to support programs or projects in the humanities.

## **Are there any restrictions on grant expenditures?**

Grant funds cannot be spent on the following: the construction or renovation of facilities; programs that promote a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view; programs that advocate social action; or programs outside the scope of the humanities.

## **Application Process**

### **When is the application due?**

The deadline for Creating Humanities Communities applications is **February 15, 2017**.

### **I think I will need help completing the grant application. Will staff talk me through the process?**

To assist with the completion of the application (in particular the budget form), staff will be available via phone (202-606-8309) on the following dates (from 1 P.M. to 3 P.M. EST): January 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, and February 7, 8, and 9, 2017.

### **Will NEH review a preliminary draft of our proposal?**

NEH will provide feedback on drafts that are submitted on or before **January 16, 2017**. You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this preliminary review. The draft itself should include a full **narrative section** and the **proposed budget**.

Staff will provide feedback via e-mail and phone conversation. Keep in mind that staff comments on the draft proposals are not part of the formal review process and have no bearing on whether the application will receive funding. Please submit your draft to Challenge Grants by emailing [challenge@neh.gov](mailto:challenge@neh.gov).

### **Who will evaluate my grant application after I submit it?**

Your application will be reviewed by evaluators—some of whom may be librarians, museum directors, and school administrators, working at institutions comparable to the applicant institutions. NEH staff also comments on matters of fact or on significant issues that otherwise would be missing from the reviews of outside evaluators and then makes recommendations to the National Council on the Humanities. The National Council meets at various times during the year to advise the NEH chairman on grants. The chairman takes into account the advice provided by the review process and, by law, makes all funding decisions. More details about NEH's review process are available [here](#).

## **Matching and Fundraising**

### **When can my organization start fundraising?**

Fundraising for NEH's Creating Humanities Communities grants may begin in February 2017—at the time an organization applies, in anticipation of a possible award.

### **What types of funding count as a match?**

Creating Humanities Communities grants require a cash match raised from nonfederal third parties.

Some examples of nonfederal third parties are individuals, state or local governments, corporations, and foundations. Funds from other federal entities do not count as a match.

### **Can we include money from our budget as a match?**

No. Only gifts raised from nonfederal third parties may count as a match. Funds provided by the grantee institution or the collaborating institutions do not count as a match.

### **Who is responsible for administering NEH funds?**

The project director and grant administrator specified by the application will be in charge of reporting the annual certification of gifts and managing NEH funds throughout the award process.

### **What happens if we don't meet the matching requirement?**

Creating Humanities Communities matching dollars are provided on a one-to-one basis. There will be no extensions, and organizations may not recover matching funds forfeited one year in the following year.

For example, if in the first year an organization raises only \$3,000 of its \$5,000 goal, NEH will provide only \$3,000 in match. If the organization raises only \$5,000 of the \$10,000 goal in the second year, NEH will provide only \$5,000. If the organization exceeds its \$15,000 goal in the final year by raising an additional \$5,000 (raising a total of \$20,000), NEH will still provide only \$15,000. If the reduced funding substantially changes your project, you will be required to submit a revised scope of work and budget for approval by NEH.

### **What happens if we meet all the fundraising goals in the first year or before the deadline? Can we get all of our federal matching money in the first year?**

NEH is unable to “speed up” its funding schedule. If you have raised gifts going beyond your yearly goal, you may certify the additional funds in the current year, and they will count toward your fundraising goals in the future years of the grant.

### **Where can I find information on the eligibility and certification of gifts raised to match the federal offer of a Creating Humanities Communities grant?**

[Federal Matching Funds Guidelines](#) govern the eligibility of gifts raised to match the federal Creating Humanities Communities offer, as well as accounting for and certifying gifts.